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CASTRO ASSAILS ATTACK ON HAVANA SHORE AREA

Havana Domestic Television and Radio Services in Spanish 1442 GMT 14 November 1965--F

(Speech by Prime Minister Fidel Castro at the graduation exercises for doctors and stomatologists, relayed live from Turquino Peak in the Sierra Maestra)

(Text) Honored guests, professors, graduates of medicine and stomatology, students, and peasants:

It is not easy to deliver these graduation remarks on Turquino Peak without going into some important detail--these hills have always been Turquino Peak--for a number of reasons, and foremost because I know very well all that you who come here have done. I know well the long hours of the march, the exhaustion, the thirst, worry in some cases, the desperation, and the considerable heroic will and strength you have shown to be able to get here. There is something that cannot be told with words; it is really that moment when one gets to Turquino. Each one has his own way of expressing this. Some are speechless while others cry with emotion. But I do not believe there is a single person who at that moment does not experience a unique feeling of infinite satisfaction because of the accomplishment, the victory won, and the will power shown, for in some individual cases this is really what could be called an heroic effort.

Nobody climbs mountains with ease. Nobody climbs mountains with ease and without effort. Even so, there are some peasants who climb and descend at almost a run and with a load on their backs. But they do not climb the mountains without some effort. They have simply gotten used to this continuous effort, to this sacrifice. Of course, for some it is greater than for others, but the collective spirit with which we arrived here is truly admirable. If there is something worth emphasizing, it is the sense of honor and modesty which prevailed in this contingent of comrades and women comrades who make this journey. We, who have traveled these mountains on several occasions, both in the days of war and later, have seen how you have behaved, and I want to say that truly the level--if this can be measured in percentage or in any way--of modesty, the sense of obligation and honor that we have seen on this trip is superior to any we have seen before. (applause)

During the war there were many who came to join our forces, but of these, many left. At the school where we trained those who wanted to join our rebel forces and did not have weapons, it can be said that out of every 100, 80 left. Of course, the other 20 were unquestionably good. On many other occasions and excursions, the number of those who (Castro chuckles) have returned has been much greater.

This universal spirit, this feeling of sacrifice and abnegation which we have observed, has been very, very, very much noticed by us. And it is of particular importance to stress and to admire the effort made by a substantial group of professors from the Medical School. (applause) It is not, of course, that the professors of the Medical School are old men (Castro smiles), as some have called them, "the old men." (Castro laughs) Actually we can say that our university faculties are quite young, (Castro laughs) and these include the Medical School.

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But we must say that the type of activity, in general, of the professors--even though they are not old, very old--their lack of contact with nature, of the chances of engaging in strong physical activity and exercises (are not conducive to good conditioning--ed.) although it may be said in passing that I know of some who, having had this experience--plan on getting in proper shape for any future eventualities such as this one. Some who were very healthy continued to be so, of course, but they stumbled here and there and this trip to Turquino has been like a warning not to let themselves be weakened, actually, by mere intellectual work.

In any case, we have all noticed this very much. And we were highly delighted to see that this university (graduation--ed.), about which Dr. Dorticos spoke, this School of Medicine from where, unfortunately--I'm not going to say solely for political reasons, because we are going to be fair--because of a mixture of political reasons and poor work done in the first period of the revolution, many university professors deserted. What I say about poor work I say as a matter of self criticism, which is just for us to say and, of course, not as an excuse for anyone because no subjective factor, no poor work justifies the desertion from duty of anyone. But it is very satisfactory to know that our medical and stomatological, well let's call it medical sciences faculty in a word, in a single concept, can count on professors of this type, of this spirit.

Actually, at a moment such as today's--a moment marking the triumph of our medicine, not only in its scientific aspects--in these it (the triumph--ed.) is unquestionably magnificent. (Castro leaves thought incomplete--ed.) And those who said that our university was improvising doctors, we must remind them that they who graduate here today began to study at the university and have been taking their courses for the past seven years of revolution.

What is more, they have studied incomparably better conditions than before, with a rigor, a discipline, a morale such as has never been seen in our university--a morale which permits us to say with pride that the student who tries to cheat or to obtain a grade by fraud does not need the university authorities to punish him because the students themselves, with a very high sense of duty and justice, take care of expelling them from their midst. (applause)

When did our university experience anything like this in the past? When did your students ever acquire this moral conscience to repudiate fraud, lies, to the unearned grade and diploma? But it's not just the scientific level, but the extraordinary human quality attained by our students in general, and most especially, by our medical sciences students.

This is why I say today is a day of victory for our medicine, for our university, and it has necessarily to be a day of deep satisfaction to all those who have contributed to this, because today it may be said that it is worthwhile to be a professor of a school or a faculty producing such men. (applause) It is a source of pride to come forth with a title from that faculty, and it is a source of pride to belong to that contingent, to that generation that today we are graduating and that demonstrates a lesson for us of how men who have faith can do great things, and seriously of how the men of poor faith, the men who do not believe in other men, those who desert, who abandon their obligation, are incapable of ever achieving anything for the good of humanity.

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On this trip, many of you have had the opportunity to comprehend many things without words, without indoctrination, without speeches, in that familiar but eloquent language of realities, of the social realities, and human realities, because I am sure that more than abstract ideas, inclinations, vocation, the natural condition of each one of you, which is unquestionably good, will contribute so that you will know how to fulfill your obligation, so that on every occasion you will know how to carry yourself in the best manner and reflect the attitude of the peasants of these mountains. (applause) The class of men and women which you have seen, also the kindness, the friendliness, the generosity, the solidarity, the recognition, the gratitude, of these men and women, of the young and old, who have worked under such difficult conditions, who have developed and lived in these mountains, their absolutely spontaneous actions, the flowers with which they welcomed us, the fruits of their harvests, their coffee and water, their willingness to help us; the cooperation they gave us in the organization of everything; their affection for the doctors--this is why I spoke about gratitude and recognition, because they showed (the doctors--ed.) how much the people appreciate their work, how much the people love you, how much this peasantry shows you the high regard they have for the social role you are going to play.

But furthermore, they supply us this revolutionary lesson by giving us a better understanding than any words or argument could provide why we fight and for whom we fight; why we struggle in the revolution and for whom we struggle in the revolution, and who is accomplishing and depending the revolution. (One senses this--ed.) when one comes into these mountains, not because these mountains were the scene of the struggle, but because these mountains are an expression of the fruits of that struggle; and when one approaches the Minas del Frio school and the boys begin to appear, those impressive, revolutionary realizations of our people, that kind of men and youth who are being formed there, that contingent of future educators, that meeting of our university students with those other forces which surge, that spirit, that level of awareness in our peasants, that level of education and culture, that human sensibility, that entirely new attitude before life, that secureness, that confidence, that optimism of an entire population and not only its confidence, but its optimism, its secureness in the future, but also its force. Because these peasants not only showed us their kindness and their solidarity, their sensibility, they also showed us as allies and stalwarts of the workers, of the revolutionary intellectuals, the force with which they can defend their cause. (applause)

We have heard many comrades speak with admiration and praise of the mountain companies. (applause) They have been able to see what organized force of the peasants is--the invincible force, amassed in its entirety, in their knowledge of these mountains, in their ability to appear day or night, rain or shine, through any gap or mountain pass with or without light, whether there be roads or not. This shows that nothing or nobody could defeat such a force.

We know this well and we know what this means. We know what this world represents, because there are two worlds. There are always two worlds, and we must say two, because the difference is so outstanding, so radical between one type of people and another, between one type of men and another; the difference is so incommensurable in all the orders among that deeply revolutionary people and that minority, repugnant of weak mind, repugnantly incapable of all sensibility, repugnantly incapable of all human solidarity.

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That difference is so big that it can be said that these things of the revolution will never be understood until one has contacts with these realities, because when one only has contact with part of the realities, when one only has contact with one of these worlds, nothing about the revolution is known. It is lived, it is felt, it is learned when one has contact with this revolutionary world, which is the world that has surrounded all of us these days.

I was also telling you that it was hard for us to say these things, because these mountains are naturally very dear for us. These places are for us very sacred. And for us who were men of faith, who with very little material resources, who against great obstacles had to fight while maintaining our confidence and our faith steadfast, it is logically moving for us to pass through these places, to attend this event, to see this graduation, in places such as these. We understand the great importance that faith has for the people, faith in mankind, faith in his fellow man.

It is because of this faith, by mobilizing these moral forces, by mobilizing wills and virtues, which abound in such great amounts in our country, that this project of the revolution was possible; that this incredible school city which is arising is possible; that this, even more incredible school where 9,000 youths will be admitted next term to get teacher training is possible; and that this degree of optimism, assurance, confidence, and happiness in our peasants and our people is possible. It is because of this that we behold with such a sense, with such a spirit the difficulties that may still lie before us. It is with such a spirit that we must behold those who presume to destroy this work; those who dream of the impossible--to go backward, to move uphill against this implacable creative torrent of our revolution.

We must look with contempt on those who want to destroy this; those who want to replace this with yesterday, with the past; who want to replace all the beauty which the revolution creates with all the putridness which the revolution swept out. (applause) It is logical for our enemies to be hurt by this victory. It is logical for our enemies to be pained by this graduation. How can it not but pain them? And they show it. It is logical for our enemies to be extraordinarily displeased by all the prospects of progress implied by this in every field; (displeased about--ed.) our organization not just about our educational institutions which train professionals and technicians, but about our Ministry of Public Health, about our television, about our technicians who were capable of doing this which for the first time happens in our country (applause), the unimaginable (feat--ed.) of transmitting by television the graduation from Turquino Peak. The oath taken by the graduating students has been a success, a step forward, a deed accomplished. Its revolutionary content is internationalist. All this must pain them considerably. Perhaps they tried to counteract this in some manner yesterday or last night, according to reports arriving this morning, and which I am going to read to you: "At 0245 in the morning, approximately, a pirate launch opened fire toward land at Laguna Street in Havana. Three or four minutes later, another pirate launch, apparently looking for the President's house, opened fire hitting the National Aquarium many times with machinegun fire."

And that this should happen today of all days. What a magnificent opportunity to draw a contrast; what a splendid opportunity to compare the work of the revolution and the work of the counterrevolution; to compare the symbolism of 400 doctors and stomatologists graduating on Turquino peak to bring health, to bring life (Castro highly agitated at this point--ed.) to bring happiness to the people. (applause)

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And the miserable ones, the miserable ones at the service of imperialism, of reaction, the most bastard selfishness, fire machineguns, against any house-- they do not care if they kill a mother, if they kill a child. It is obvious that his incident is the result of desperation. It is a result of the irritation of our enemies who suffer defeat after defeat in all fields such as the defeat they suffered as a result of the proposals of the Revolutionary Government on 28 September, because we must say, we must say that it was not the imperialists who opened the doors, it was we who opened them with a handful of truths uttered opportunely. (applause). It was the revolution with its ethics, with its truth which--giving a push to the doors that imperialism closed with lies and with hypocrisies--opened the door to the counterrevolutionary worms or those similar to the imperialist monster.

And this, it appears, pains them. Who must we blame for these villainies if not the Government of the United States? Whom must we blame if not the CIA, who are the ones who have perpetrated all types of misdeeds and crimes against this country?

And when we were presenting diplomas to that mother dressed in mourning clothes, and to that father whose son could not be graduated here today, it hurts our soul to remember that other strike, that other crime of Giron, by virtue of which, on a day like today, a mother had to come dressed in mourning clothes to receive the diploma of a young Cuban, of a young man who was preparing himself to become a physician. This reminded us of all the depravities which they have committed against us.

But I am going to say straight from the heart that it is not bad that they harass us! That it is good that they do harass us! It is not bad that they, our enemies, behave as they are, because we will know how to carry ourselves as we are, as their irreconcilable enemies. (applause) Because we in reality do not want peace of any kind with imperialism. While there is imperialism and while there are nations that are victims of imperialist aggression, and while there are nations that fight against imperialism, their cause will be our cause, no matter in what corner of the world. (applause)

It is for that reason that we will continue to prepare ourselves, even if it costs resources and energy. We will continue to arm ourselves to the teeth. (applause) We will continue to prepare the people, we will continue to organize mountain militia units, in the fields, in the cities, and everywhere. (applause) Each one of you knows that this nation which you have seen here has the conditions and the capacity to go into combat and to fight, and to struggle to the last drop of blood. (applause) It is not because we are war-like, but because we have dignity, because we have a nation and patriotism, because we have self-respect and because we do not consider life as ignominious or as indecent, that we can do nothing more but to react against all that filth, against all that dirt, against all that poverty, against all that banditry, against all that insolent shamelessness of the imperialists.

It is good to proclaim it here from Turquino peak, because the triumph of the revolution has not made us weaker. The successes of the revolution have not made us less revolutionary, but they have made us more revolutionary. This climb of Turquino by our students, by our professors, by all of us, symbolizes that spirit which brought us to these mountains--this spirit is today like yesterday and will always be our spirit, the spirit of our revolution. (applause)

Fatherland or death, we will win! (prolonged applause)

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